

Liaison

Library Association News-Sheet

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September, 1959

Nalگو Backs New Salary Claim

SO far as the library profession is concerned, the outstanding item on the Agenda of this year's annual NALGO Conference held in Scarborough, was that relating to the recent salary award for Chartered Librarians. Three motions were on the Paper, one in the name of the National Executive Committee, using the Roberts Report as a means of re-opening negotiations; the second in the name of the Nottingham Branch, supported by Solihull and their respective District Committees; and a third in the name of the North Western and N. Wales District Committee amending the Nottingham motion.

Curtain raiser

A meeting of librarian delegates had previously been held at the Central Library, Scarborough, at which the problem was thoroughly aired. It was decided that the Nottingham Branch would move its motion and would incorporate the amendment. It was further agreed to have a similar meeting at each Conference in future. There is no doubt that had there been more time many more motions on library grading would have reached the Conference, and Nottingham are to be congratulated in formulating their motion and transmitting it in time to be put on the Agenda.

History of negotiations

In moving the NEC motion to the Conference their spokesman, Mr. G. R. Ashton outlined the history of the award since 1931 and went on to say that for the last two years the matter has been raised at every meeting of the National Joint Council. Originally an attempt was made to get agreement on APT II for a staff of three. On about six occasions the employers were not prepared to move; the number they considered appropriate was more in the region of twelve staff. Early in 1959 there ap-

peared to be some softening of attitude on the part of the employers but even so they were only prepared to consider an award on the basis of seven staff. Since a figure of five had been mentioned in earlier discussions with the L.A. representatives, an attempt at compromise was eventually agreed and the present figure of six was accepted. Mr. Ashton paid a tribute to the L.A. for its close co-operation throughout the negotiations. The staff side were not happy with the result but it was felt that no more could have been achieved at the time and any change that benefited the membership of NALGO, even if it was only one member, was better than nothing. The L.A. had been promised that if anything came along to alter the position, the situation would be reviewed immediately.

The Roberts Report was considered to contain a valuable contribution to the matter since it referred to salaries and to parity with the teaching profession. It was not known, however, if or when the Roberts Report would receive Government support.

A Fresh approach

The NEC had decided that a new approach could now be made and, after two meetings, had met the L.A. representatives. Complete agreement had been reached on a new line of approach and a plan is now being knocked into shape. It will then pass through the Service Conditions Committee of the NEC and a claim then made to the employers. In the circumstances Mr. Ashton hoped that the other motion and its amendment would be withdrawn. Whilst the NEC accepted the spirit of the

Some of the items delayed by the recent printing strike have been included in this issue. It is appreciated that these items have probably little news value at home, but it is thought they may still be of interest particularly to overseas readers.

New pay claim (cont.)

Nottingham motion it could not accept the criticism in it in view of the fact that everything possible had been done.

The NEC motion was carried.

The Nottingham motion was moved by H. S. Corden, who, whilst he is not a librarian, had obviously been well briefed. He agreed to incorporate the amendment in his motion. Whilst Mr. Ashton had put the N.E.C. case clearly, Mr. Corden felt that the NEC motion was one of long-term policy, more particularly since we have no idea at the present time whether the Government will accept the Roberts Report. The 1959 grading for librarians was quite unacceptable and had caused an outcry throughout the country; its effect was to increase existing anomalies. Mr. Corden called upon the Conference to endorse his motion as a matter for immediate action.

The motion was seconded by Mr. L. Cannon (Dagenham Branch), who referred to the NEC's apparent disregard for the minority groups in NALGO, and further supported by Mr. E. W. McManus (Barking). It was quite obvious that the feeling of the Conference was by this time with the librarians and that to prolong discussion would be a waste of time.

On being put to the vote the Nottingham motion appeared to be carried unanimously. It read (as amended)—

"That this Conference deplores the action of the National Joint Council in formulating the new grades for librarians, namely—

The post occupied by a chartered librarian in charge of a branch or district library or in charge of a department of a library, and supervising a staff of six other whole-time officers or the equivalent, APT II.

This decision aggravates rather than alleviates the anomalies created by the Charter revision, the number of staff specified bearing no relation to the internal structure of library establishment. It urges that new negotiations proceed on the basis of professional qualifications and specific responsibilities, and that these be opened forthwith."

W. S. Hudson (Kensington).

Brighton School of Librarianship Old Students Association

The Third Annual Reunion Dinner of the Brighton School of Librarianship Old Students Association will be held at the Royal Pavilion Hotel, Brighton, on Saturday October 3rd at 7.15 p.m. Tickets (including service charges) 13s. 6d. from D. W. Bromley, 10 Kingland Road, Wollaton, Nottingham.

D.S.I.R. "SECRECY" DEPLORED

"The annual report for 1958 of the Research Council (D.S.I.R.) envisages an expansion of information services to ensure that the Department's research results are more widely known and applied... Aslib is specially concerned with such work, but the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research continue to shroud such activities largely in secrecy. No information whatever as to the magnitude of expansion in this field is disclosed, other than that in the next few years it will average three times the present figure for the National Lending Library... A reasonably detailed review is overdue." (From an editorial in *Nature*, June 20th, 1959.)

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Steep Rise in Chemical Abstracts Rates

The American Chemical Society has approved the following substantial increases in the subscription rates to the *Chemical Abstracts* service; they take effect from 1960, and the present rates are shown in brackets.

Non-members	\$570 (350)
Colleges and universities	\$150 (80)
Members personal use	\$ 32 (20)

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Fire Risk Test

Some 14,000 surplus books, provided by New York Public Library, are to be deliberately burned in a test conducted by an insurance company. It has been claimed that books on shelves are not very combustible and this test is to help decide whether reduced fire insurance premiums are justified for libraries in the U.S.A.

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Challenge from China

China's burgeoning activity and interest in scientific and technological development is further evidenced by a report from the U.S. National Science Foundation that there are now 68 research institutes connected with the Chinese Academy of Science—double the number that existed in 1952.

In 1960 the N.S.F. is to make a modest start on translating the more important of the journals published by these institutes. They will begin with two or three, adding further titles to the translation programme as it becomes possible.

The N.S.F. found that approximately 450 scientific journals are published in China and that rather more than 200 of them are available in U.S. government libraries in Washington.

"ROGER-LIBRARY-OUT"

These and other similar mysterious words were heard in the gallery of the reference library at Stoke Newington on Saturday June 27th. Through the co-operation of the local Civil Defence unit the library was linked by short-wave radio with an enquiry desk in Clissold Park, about a quarter of a mile away. The "stunt" formed part of the NALGO stand in the Borough Council's Annual Field Day, and it was intended to draw attention to the services the library provides.

There were displays by the lending and children's libraries and of a small number of basic reference books for answering questions on the spot, the more complex queries being sent by radio to the library itself.

After a slow start, during which "first-night nerves" afflicted the staff, the ionosphere was soon humming with questions—and most of the answers—and the Reference Librarian and an assistant in the Park and three assistants at base were kept busy for some four hours. The response was better than most people had expected and, although many of the enquiries were of a flippant of "catch-question" type, the publicity value was probably great.

The whole NALGO display, to which all departments of the Council made some contribution, was organized by the branch's Public Relations Officer, who is the Children's Librarian. The library's Chief Assistant is the Branch Honorary Secretary and the Assistant Reference Librarian is the Branch Education Secretary. How many NALGO branches of similar size, we wonder, can show so large a participation by the library staff in NALGO affairs?

A. S. Williams.

"Unpainted and Filthy"

Discussion of the annual report of the library at Goole (Yorks.) evoked strictures on the decorative condition of the library buildings. Goole's is a small library, with five staff serving a population of 19,400. The librarian's latest report drew attention to the acute shortage of shelving which, he said, caused unnecessary work, congestion, waste of time and confusion. Some parts of the library, he went on, had not been decorated or even cleaned down in the last ten years. Walls and ceilings were dirty and the lecture hall had not been painted for many years.

One member of the committee attributed the "filthy" condition of the walls and ceilings to the complete lack of a hot water supply for cleaning; a deficiency which the committee instructed should be repaired at once.

Joint Weekend Conference of the Northern Branch, the A.A.L. (North Eastern Division) and the R. & S.L. Section (Northern Group) will be held at Otterburn Hall, October 30th-November 1st, 1959. Details of the programme will be announced later.

Gloomy Staff Position at Rotherham

"A backlog of work of truly alarming proportions has piled up which, with a senior staff normally only sufficient for essential day-to-day tasks, there is little prospect of clearing within the near future."

This warning is carried in his latest annual report, in which Mr. L. G. Lovell pulls no punches in reciting the shortcomings in Rotherham's library service, arising from the inadequate number of qualified staff. "By the two yardsticks formulated by the Roberts Committee, our library service is seriously sub-standard. We fail by a long way to reach the suggested minimum expenditure on books of 2s. per head of population at 1958, and our staff is well below that considered by the Committee necessary for an efficient service."

In terms of qualified librarians Rotherham's library service is being "run on a shoestring". The two qualified staff in the reference library "have to attend to the needs of other departments and, in particular, to cope with the huge volume of cataloguing, whilst we have no qualified children's librarian at all for our extensive system of schools' and children's libraries—this work being done by unqualified staff with inadequate supervision". The position is aggravated by the otherwise gratifying record of much increased use of the student's room and a substantial rise in the numbers of enquiries handled.

The report puts the immediate staff requirements as: "At the very least . . . three more posts for qualified librarians—a lending librarian, a children's librarian, and an assistant cataloguer." But against this Mr. Lovell can only offer a gloomy prospect. "Owing to the prevailing national shortage of qualified librarians . . . and the complete lack of promotion prospects faced here by our staff, it is a moot point how long it will be before our existing trained staff will be still further depleted by movement away to better paying authorities."

£5,000 STANDARD UPSETS ROBERTS CRITICS

"We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do—!" could fairly describe the reaction of certain councils to the Roberts Report. If the Report's recommendations are eventually accepted they are faced with the prospect of losing their library powers, and there have been many expressions of alarm and dismay, as well as some militant talk which may sound well enough in the committee room but which takes on a faintly ludicrous air in cold print. Whatever their first reactions, however, many of the smaller authorities will have been confirmed in their attitudes by the observations on the Report which have been made public by two of the sectional interests principally involved.

Challenge from Caxton Hall

As was noted in the May *Liaison*, the Smaller Public Libraries Group called a meeting in London, on July 17th, to discuss their views on the Roberts recommendations, as they might effect the smaller library authority.

The S.P.L.G. draws the greater number of its members from authorities serving populations less than 50,000. In a brief history lesson, delegates to the conference at Caxton Hall were reminded that "The Smaller Public Libraries Group was set up in 1955 because it was realized that the majority of the smaller authorities were not fulfilling their library functions properly, due mainly to lack of knowledge and of leadership. . . . After the Group had successfully defeated the Library Association's proposals for library reorganization, in 1955, it was felt that some standards of library service should be suggested in order that the smaller authorities could substantiate their claims to retain local autonomy in the administration of their libraries. With this in mind, the Group published its *Standards of Service in Smaller Authorities*,* in May 1957." The keyword of this latter document was a phrase in its introduction—"The acceptance of a set of minimum standards seems to be essential if the smaller library is to continue to exist."

The quintessence of the S.P.L.G.'s *Standards* was a formula for minimum annual expenditure on books, and this was also made the focus of the conference. There were resolutions from authority members to alter or to lower the Group's standards, and there was another which wanted the conference to reject the Roberts Report entirely and to forget the whole thing. But under the spur of some convincing oratory from Mr. H. G. T. Christopher (Borough Librarian, Penge) the conference resisted them in overwhelming favour of the resolutions from its executive committee.

Alternative minimum standard

The S.P.L.G. accepted and endorsed the findings of the Roberts Committee, with one important

exception. The conference objected "that £5,000 minimum annual expenditure is not essential to secure efficient library service by smaller, independent public library authorities". The group would substitute its own standard:

"The minimum annual expenditure on books (not binding) of authorities under 50,000 population should be either £2,250 or 3s. per head—related to 1958 prices—whichever is the greater; for larger authorities, of 50,000 or more population, this standard would apply for the first 50,000 then a further annual expenditure of 2s. per head, at 1958 prices, above 50,000."

Another provision, which would allow a significant departure from the Roberts principle, was an escape clause to permit any existing library authority which could not comply with whatever standards are finally laid down, to appeal to the Minister to be allowed to continue to exercise independent library functions by substantiating their ability to provide an otherwise satisfactory service.

The conference concluded by deciding to transmit their views to the Minister of Education and to ask him to receive a deputation.

A.M.C. CRITICAL

Many points in Report disputed

A week later, the Council of the Association of Municipal Corporations considered the views of its Libraries Committee on the Roberts Report. And if there can be any comparison between the S.P.L.G. and the A.M.C. it is in the nature of David to Goliath. The A.M.C. can boast a membership of 430 local authorities; it is influential; it pays its Secretary over £5,000 a

* Copies of the *Standards*, and also of the Group's Memorandum of Evidence to the Roberts Committee, may be had from Mr. J. F. T. Thomson, Central Library, Dick Institute, Kilmarnock.

year. Its committee on libraries, museums and art galleries provides for a membership of over 30 authority members and half-a-dozen officers; and on the Roberts recommendations this committee's views, which the A.M.C. approved, are uncompromising and critical. "The terms of reference of the Roberts Committee included the relationship of public libraries to other libraries . . . the Committee appear to have neglected this part of their task."

Stress on local responsibility

In the opening paragraphs the A.M.C. document makes its standpoint quite plain: "The Association is not indifferent to deficiencies in the public library service, or any other service, but it does not believe that it would be serving the interests of its members by recommending the imposition of standards which might well be inappropriate in the local circumstances in respect of many of them." This recalls the A.M.C.'s evidence to the Roberts Committee, that "any change must justify the loss of local influence and control". And a key phrase in this later document is the statement: "In our view the library service is essentially linked with the urban areas of population", a point which is reiterated elsewhere—"Delegation is not a satisfactory substitute for local control"; "... each library authority has to decide for itself"; and a final assertion, "the smaller boroughs are fully competent to maintain library services".

The A.M.C. document contains numerous points of difference with the Roberts recommendations, but these appear to be the main ones:

- Resistance to the idea of any diminution of local responsibility for library services;
- Redeployment of library functions should be on a population basis, not on some minimum annual book expenditure—a "quite arbitrary" criterion;
- Opposition generally to county councils being designated library authorities ("... no confidence in them" as such).

Taking the Roberts recommendations one by one, the A.M.C. questions "if it is necessary for any government department to exercise supervision over library authorities". If, however, Parliament decides that efficiency must be determined by the imposition of standards, then the A.M.C. would prefer some form of *inspection*, as is done with the police, fire and education services, rather than the Minister employ a default power against an authority that failed to meet those standards. It doubts, too, the need for the Minister to appoint "two advisory bodies to assist

him". The A.M.C. would prefer the Minister to consult existing bodies—such as the A.M.C. And when it comes to the recommendation later on that the advisory bodies should consider such matters as recruitment and training, and the number of reference and children's librarians posts, the A.M.C. considers that authorities can be safely left to get this advice "from their librarians and other sources" and to form their own judgements.

It should be the statutory duty of every public library authority "to provide an efficient library service", recommends the Report. Omit the adjective "efficient" replies the A.M.C.: "... if the duty is placed on the library authority then they must have reasonable discretion without the imposition of a so-called national standard."

At the recommendation of a minimum yearly expenditure on books of £5,000, the A.M.C. document fairly bristles. "No amount, however, calculated, can determine which authorities should remain responsible for the public library service... High expenditure might well be a measure of inefficiency", while "in smaller areas it might be gross extravagance to spend £5,000 p.a. on books... An adequate annual expenditure on books is necessary for the proper functioning of the library but it is by no means the only test of efficiency and the Roberts Committee appears to give undue weight to it as compared with the provision of adequate buildings and qualified staff."

A.M.C.'s Alternative Formula

The A.M.C. offers an alternative basis. "Authorities with populations of 20,000 and above, after reorganization of local authority areas, should be public library authorities. Authorities with a population of less than 20,000 should not be library authorities, with the exception of the existing 42 authorities in this group who should retain their powers but should have the right to surrender them to the county council if they so desire. The pattern of library provision thus established should not be subject to further review for 15 years..."

The recommendation that "all library authorities should be given powers to appoint committees directly responsible to the council" is supported by the A.M.C.

Charge for N.C.L. and "personal" services

On the Roberts proposals affecting library co-operation, "compulsory membership of regions" is unacceptable unless there are "adequate safeguards and representation for borough councils on regional committees". And the A.M.C. wants to see "substantial contributions" made by those non-public libraries "which together make equal if not greater use of the N.C.L. than public libraries". As for the

Roberts view that the completion of the N.C.L. and the regional catalogues is "a matter of urgency" the A.M.C. doubts if this is "a first priority in the field of library co-operation . . . Before any public money is spent on this object a more detailed investigation should be made."

As to the legally contentious point of charges made for library services, the Roberts Committee proposed limiting these to notifications for reserved books and overdue fines. The A.M.C. repeats the view put forward in its evidence to the Committee, that "a charge can reasonably be made where the service provided is largely personal and recreational, as it is in the case of gramophone records and films".

Fundamentally opposed

The A.M.C. document concludes:

"Our study of the Report leaves us with the basic impression that the Roberts Committee were intent upon dividing library authorities into two classes. This, in our view, is its fundamental weakness. The first class consists of counties and county boroughs, who being education authorities are to be accepted without question as library authorities. The second class, the remainder of library authorities, risk losing their powers if they do not comply with what is, in our view, an arbitrary yardstick of efficiency. There runs through the report an implication that this second group are inferior authorities who are only to hold library powers in exceptional cases. If the Minister of Education were to be granted surveillance over the library service in accordance with the Roberts Committee's recommendations it is not difficult to predict that the pattern of administration would follow that of education and that only a minority of non-county boroughs would survive as 'accepted districts' administering public libraries.

We are fundamentally opposed to this view . . ."

A sentence earlier in the document possibly gets as near as anything to putting the A.M.C.'s attitude in a nutshell: "We hope the Government will resist the temptation to tell our members how they should carry out their functions."

A letter from the County Libraries Section has led the L.A. to write to the Ministry of Education informing them that it disagrees with the suggestion in paragraph 68 of the Roberts Report regarding the staffing of libraries.

CORRECTION

In connection with the report (*Cinderella or Tortoise?*) on the last conference of the Reference and Special Libraries Group, in the May issue of *Liaison*, we are asked to point out that Mr. Vickery's figure of 150 man-hours devoted to research applied only to the Group's Research Section, and not to the Library Association as a whole.

A Stimulating Report from India

A duplicated document of some 220 pages recently crossed my desk from the In to the Out box. To read such a bulky typescript is a weariness to the flesh, and I began to thumb through it in a desultory manner, only too ready to initial it and pass it on as finished with. But despite my weary flesh, my mind was caught by the document, and I found myself reading it with close attention, and finally with admiration for its authors. It was the Report of the Advisory Committee for Libraries* set up in 1955-56 by the Ministry of Education of India.

"An Indian Kenyon"

This is a model of what such a report should be, covering the history and present condition of libraries in India, a description of what libraries do and could offer, observations on personnel and their training, an assessment of the place of the library in society, and a sober estimate of costs. All this is presented in a prosaic manner; but through it all shines a conviction of the essentiality of libraries to a modern community, and an informed grasp of what they can offer socially, intellectually and culturally.

The problems which are currently being discussed within the Library Association (e.g. designation of library posts, and the syllabus upon which library education should be based) find their place in here, together with statistical surveys, and national estimates of cost. The realism and good sense underlying this report is shown by the following quotations: "... the order of funds we need if a moderate quality of library service were set up . . . comes to about 230 million rupees, recurring.

"It is obvious that this country is not yet ready for this effort. We have therefore to start with a modest pace . . . It is hoped that by the end of the sixth Five Year Plan . . . funds may be available, not for a first rate library service but, at any rate, for a base-level service."

B.I.P.

* In Sept.-Oct. 1955 a seminar on "The Role of Libraries in Social Education", organized by the Indian Adult Education Association, recommended that a library Commission be set up to investigate the state of libraries in India. The Ministry of Education (India) accepted the recommendation, and set up an Advisory Committee for libraries under the chairmanship of Shri K. P. Sinha. The Secretary was Shri Sohan Singh, Assistant Educational Adviser, Ministry of Education (India).

BRIEFLY

As an experiment, **Westminster** are to stop publishing a report on their Libraries Department annually. Instead, a report will be issued every three years and in the intervening years a summary of library activities will be included in the council agenda.

An **acoustic booth** for making telephone calls has been ordered for Lewisham's reference library. **Cubicles** for the use of students are to be provided at Tottenham.

Shevington sequel. Following representations made after a crippled girl had been refused admittance to a library at Shevington, Lancs., the Ministry of Education has amended model by-laws, issued to guide public library authorities, so that hand propelled wheelchairs may be permitted in libraries.

An early-morning queue formed before the doors opened when **Hull** put on a sale of standard and long-playing records, which had been issued more than 50 times, priced at 9d. and 3s. respectively. At times well over a hundred people crowded into the room to inspect the records. The sale surpassed expectation; by the end of the second day barely a couple of hundred standard-playing records remained unsold, and there were enquiries about the next sale. **Hornsey** are offering their used records at 3s. 6d. for the ten-inch size, and 5s. each for the larger sizes.

Republication is planned for October of a literary review under the title *John O'London's Weekly*. Mr. Ernest Kay, formerly a Managing Director of *Time and Tide*, will be its editor. The initial print will be not less than 60,000 copies and the price 6d.

This new enterprise is unconnected with the original *John O'London's* which began publication in 1919 and at the time of its cessation in 1954 was published by Newnes.

A schools' instruction scheme which started ten years ago at **Greenock** public library resulted in the visit last year of close on 1,000 school-children to the central library there. The visits are concentrated into two periods—one before the Christmas holidays and the other just before the summer break. The schools' visits are believed to account for a considerable increase in the readership of the 17-20 age group.

Newcastle flood damage. A leak in the hot water system at the central library, Newcastle, caused extensive damage to books. The public service areas of the library were unaffected, the damage being confined to staff rooms and book stores.

The **Radcliffe Science Library** at Oxford will run out of storage space for books in six years, it is estimated. Already there is insufficient room for all the students wishing to use the Radcliffe. The chairman of a committee set up a year ago to look into Oxford's library facilities said: "... the present library will have to be extended or another one built, not for the needs of the next 10 or 20 years, but for at least 50 years ahead."

First things first. A Canadian librarian writes of a branch library being built to serve a new housing estate: "A month ago we went up to look at the new library and it was standing isolated, way out in the country, and there was no evidence of the houses. This week we have been out again, and houses, apartments, churches and a shopping centre are now mushrooming up..."

Penny in the slot "... Librarians must regard the catalog as primarily a public convenience..." (p. 353 of the *ALA Bulletin*, May 1959).

The **John Crerar Library** in Chicago, known to have one of the world's largest collections of technical, scientific and medical literature, is to join forces with the library of the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, where they will share the cost of a new \$2 million building.

£8,405 was the revenue from fines last year at Wandsworth—an increase of nearly £500 over the previous year.

Unpopular career. Beddington and Wallington (Surrey) circulated all local schools, but not one application has been received for a job in the libraries.

The human touch. Fulham's latest annual report records that a Christmas card was sent to each elderly reader who enjoys the housebound library service (whereby a member of the staff calls regularly at a fixed time on pre-arranged dates with a selection of books).

A drop of 55,000 in issues of books last year is recorded by **Denbighshire** County Library, and "it is assumed that this was due to the inability of the county library to supply sufficient new books as soon as they were published".

"On a Saturday morning a week or so ago I was in our Schools Exchange room, just across the hall from the Children's Library, talking to the Children's Librarian. We were interrupted by footsteps and looked round to see a striking looking blonde, who enquired "Is this the place to start a child?" It turned out that she only wanted to enrol her daughter in the junior library—but it does prevent the job becoming boring." (R. Oxley, Derbyshire.)

RESearch is one of those fascinating occupations which it is even more fascinating to try to define. Wisely, no-one has attempted to write down precise terms of reference for Aslib's Research Officer. But Mr. Hanson left us in no doubt that to a large extent he is being paid to sit down in a quiet corner and do some hard thinking. Display boards bearing slogans like "People cost more than printed matter", staring at him across the office floor, may possibly help to create the right sort of atmosphere, but Mr. Hanson is not relying on these for inspiration. He is drawing instead upon a long acquaintance with technical information work—as information officer successively to Magnesium Metal Corporation and latterly the British Scientific Instruments Research Association—and upon a background of experience in the mechanical engineering field.

In terms of money Mr. Hanson derives his present position from an additional government grant to Aslib of £5,000 a year, which D.S.I.R. is putting up to "float" the new department and to provide the Research Officer. This grant will be reviewed at five year intervals, in the same way as is done for the universities' money by the U.G.C. The D.S.I.R. placed great stress on the formation of a Research Committee to advise on the programme of research and generally to hold a watching brief on its progress. An eleven-strong Committee has been appointed and includes Prof. J. D. Bernal, Prof. W. E. Curtis (recently associated with Newcastle's TALIC scheme), Miss I. M. Slade, Information Officer of BISRA, and L. J. Anthony, F.L.A., Deputy Librarian at Harwell.

So—given the money, a committee, a secretary and an office at a posh address—where to begin?

Clash with American Work?

One of the cornerstones in Mr. Hanson's present scheme of things has been the detailed questionnaire which was conducted among selected libraries, some two to three years ago, by Dr. Campbell, a former Assistant Director of Aslib. Mr. Hanson believes the results of this survey will provide some very useful and interesting data, "a sort of natural history of special libraries". During his first months at Aslib he has been making an analysis of the results of the questionnaire and Mr. Hanson intends to publish this analysis before the end of the year.

We were curious to learn from Mr. Hanson if the activities of the Council on Library Resources had in any way cut the ground from under his feet. The C.L.R. in America has been liberally financed by the Ford Foundation and the Council is now sponsoring a wide variety of research projects in library problems and documentary techniques (see notes on some

of these in *Liaison* of May 1957, February and September 1958). Mr. Hanson's ideas have not been anticipated by any of the C.L.R.'s so far. He instanced the Council's emphasis on research into machines for finding and transmitting information, and remarked: "As we see it, this is *not* the key factor in the information problem." The Aslib-sponsored research on comparative indexing methods, which is in progress at the library of the College of Aeronautics, Cranfield, is more the sort of initial investigation which Mr. Hanson envisages. "Once we have some satisfactory answers to the fundamental questions on what users want of a library or information service, *then* the machines come in." For the present Aslib's contacts with the C.L.R. are indirect, but it is expected that they will become closer once Aslib has some sort of research programme worked out.

Feeling the way

Mr. Hanson was insistent that even though a well-conceived programme would in itself only come after a lot of careful thought, it was not then going to be a matter of "rushing about *doing*". It is clearly very much more a question of feeling the way toward a practicable list of priorities; and it is undoubtedly a lot easier to decide what cannot be included, than what will (for example, Classification will not be studied). But Mr. Hanson's initial programme will probably be concerned with three main areas:

User needs;

An evaluation of the effects of the provision of information;

The L.A.'s acceptance of the need to have a Research Officer on its staff sent *Liaison* round to Belgrave Square to compare notes with Mr. C. W. Hanson, B.Sc., who in January of this year was appointed Research Officer at Aslib.

*Tiddly Bit
Hara*

A study of the optimum size of a library for a given purpose.

Under the second head there is a specific proposal from one member of the Research Committee for a test of circumstances where, on the one hand . . . , no information or library service is provided at all, compared with a fully equipped and efficient service. To these main parts of the programme would be added the "tiddly bits", short-term or restricted projects—some pre-determined, others the result of the day-to-day questions put to Aslib by its members. And Mr. Hanson anticipated that, roughly speaking, a little more than half of the time of his Department would be devoted to these short-term questions, leaving rather less than half their total time to be given to the main problems in the programme.

Co-operation with our man

By the end of D.S.I.R.'s first five years' grant Mr. Hanson is hoping that the Research Department will have completed one principal project—probably a wide ranging analysis of subject enquiries—and a dozen or so small investigations. In this connection Mr. Hanson intends using the Aslib Library as a guinea-pig for small, practical experiments.

We asked at this point whether there was likely to be co-operation with the L.A.'s Research Officer. Mr. Hanson replied that there definitely should be consultation generally, and co-operation on specific questions as and when they occurred.

The end of the first financial quinquennium will also bring Mr. Hanson to within three years of retirement, and he mentioned one project which it would give him particular satisfaction to undertake—the compilation of "what you might call the Aslib Data Book". This would be a compilation of basic facts for quick reference, for those working in the special library field and information services. It would give guidance, if not direct answers, to questions such as the rate of obsolescence in particular subject areas, the minimum stock for self-sufficiency and the various factors which can determine the optimum size of a library. From the sound of it this data book is unlikely to rival Perry or Kempe for size; nevertheless, in time it may well become familiar practice to "look it up in Hanson".

FOOTNOTE.—A new information bulletin, *Library Research in Progress*, is being published at intervals by the Library Service Division, the Office of Education, of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington 25, D.C. It is available free upon application.

LIBRARY SCIENCE ABSTRACTS

Prize Money

A detailed examination of suggestions for the improvement of the profession's own abstract journal has led to a number of ideas. The most interesting of these should lead to a new cover and title-page. The dismal face of the current volume lent point to the thought that a professional layout artist should be given a chance to improve *L.S.A.* visually. It was decided to offer a five guinea prize to students at the Glasgow School of Printing for the best design for a fresh title-page and cover.

A similarly generous mood pervaded the decision to make a token payment of five guineas a year to each of those *L.S.A.* contributors who make translated abstracts of foreign material. In view of the importance of covering the foreign literature this was thought to be cheap at the price.

Bigger, and will list new books

Another suggestion was to include, once a year, a select list of new books which had been published in the year on librarianship. This got a rather mixed reception, but it was eventually decided to try one such list as an experiment before giving the idea some second thoughts. There was no such hesitation, however, in agreeing to an increase in the size of *L.S.A.* from 72 to 84 pages each issue.

WILL YOU HELP?

L.S.A. has proved itself one of the most useful publications of the L.A., but it is dependent to a very large extent upon the voluntary help of a corps of enthusiastic and reliable contributors who are prepared to turn in abstracts at regular intervals.

The Editor needs more of these people. Will you help? Please write direct to Mr. Whatley, or to Chaucer House, if you are willing to join the *L.S.A.* team.

... AND THE "DULLEST"

And while the Publications Committee were taking a critical look at *L.S.A.*, Magliabechi, in the *Book-seller*, had some hard things to say about "one of the dullest pieces of print to come my way"—the L.A.'s annual report. "I wonder," he says, "why members of the Association do not rise in bibliographical wrath against it and demand something more expressive of the knowledge which all librarians surely must possess of the better qualities of intelligent print. Thirty-six pages of reading matter set in lines 5½ in. wide do not encourage anybody but the most devoted to give them proper attention."

Libraries on the Drawing Board

Bromley

A fresh development plan, which came as a surprise locally, has been proposed for the main shopping centre of Bromley. The New Theatre, which it was suggested originally should be demolished, is to be retained. And to help achieve the aim of widening the busy High Street and to provide more shops, the existing central library there would be pulled down and a new, much larger library built behind the shops, with a common access to both theatre and the library from the High Street.

If the plan is approved, Bromley will have the new library within five years.

Nuneaton

Government consent to a £75,000 loan is being sought to enable the building of a new central library to begin next year. Detailed plans and a model of the proposed library have been considered by the libraries committee.

An interim report on the plan for a new £250,000 central library for Norwich shows that basically a two-storey building is envisaged with a four floor book stack, each 2,800 square feet... rising from the first floor level. The main departments—lending, reference, the American Room (Norwich has strong ties with the U.S. Air Force), and newsroom—will be on the ground floor, while the Record Office will be accommodated a floor below.

St. Pancras

St. Pancras have changed their minds over building their new central library on the site of the Bedford Theatre, formerly a music hall in the Camden High Street. They have decided to revert to an earlier plan to build the library in the Euston Road, on a 60,000 sq. ft. site purchased for £22,000 from the L.C.C. in 1940 for this purpose.

In support of the change it was stated that the Euston Road would always remain the principal artery and administrative centre of St. Pancras, and the central library there would be easily accessible from all parts of the borough. The possibility of providing a branch library in Camden High Street was mentioned. For the opposition it was objected that Euston Road was, on the contrary, not accessible to residents and the traffic danger there made it totally unsuitable for including a children's library. One councillor thought that "Libraries today have got to create a demand..."

Rising between a laundry and a bus garage at Catford (London) will be a modern new library for Lewisham, costing about £81,000. The building will make use of glass curtain walling, concrete and coloured stonework and will reflect the architectural ideas current in many European and Scandinavian designs. Work should commence early in 1960 and will take about 18 months to complete. Provision is to be made for a car park, individual study cubicles in the reference library, a lecture hall and two meeting rooms.

Luton

Plans of the new central library, to be an important feature of the re-designed town centre, have been submitted to the Ministry of Housing for consideration. It is hoped to start construction of the £250,000 project next summer and to have it ready for use 18 months later. Designed by the borough architect, the library will be one of the biggest of its kind in the country, and will have a capacity of 300,000 books, which it is estimated will meet its demands for the next 20 years.

The Basement will have a lecture hall for 250 people; on the Ground floor will be the entrance, foyer, a central control point, children's library and an information room; the First floor will be dominated by a large lending hall, with a 12 ft. wide gallery along each of the two main walls; the commercial and technical room will be on the Second floor, together with the reference library, records library, a microfilm room and study cubicles.

Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire County Library's annual report for 1958-59 discloses an extensive development programme: the acquisition of sites in 21 places; the building of 3 new regional branch libraries and 8 new full-time branch libraries; the building of 18 part-time branches, and extensions to 3 existing buildings.

Yarmouth

Construction of a new, two-storey central library, mostly on the site where the old library stood in Middlegate until it was bombed, should begin this autumn. In addition to lending, reference and children's departments, there will be art and exhibition galleries, and a photographic darkroom.

Belfast

A seven-storey extension of modern design to Belfast's central library, at a cost of £134,000 has been approved. It will adjoin the existing library and will involve the demolition of a temporary, one-storey structure which is in bad repair. The completed extension will provide staff accommodation and storage for half-a-million books.

Hampstead Civic Centre

Hampstead Council are to ask the Minister of Housing for loan sanction of around £1 million to enable a start to be made on parts of the civic centre, planned by Basil Spence close to Swiss Cottage (see *Liaison*, March 1959, p. 28). The Government are generally withholding permission for municipal projects in London until the Royal Commission on London Government has made its report; but the Minister has agreed that, irrespective of the Commission's findings, certain amenities are needed in Hampstead.

Immediate loan sanction of £700,000 is to be asked in respect of the baths section of the centre, and authority will also be requested for preparation of plans to go ahead for the new central library (cost about £300,000) with a view to loan sanction for starting on this part of the civic centre as well.

Cambridge

The City Council's plan for the development of the Lion Yard area in the centre of the city has met with considerable opposition; the objectors include the Royal Fine Art Commission.

The Lion Yard scheme, which was expected to cost £5 million, would create an exclusively pedestrian shopping area in the heart of the city with extensive underground parking and would incorporate a new central library.

Richmond

The libraries committee has approved a proposal for rebuilding the central library at a cost of roughly £100,000, and for providing a branch library for the Kew Garden district at a cost of £12,000.

Mr. E. F. Knowles, Deputy Borough Librarian of Hampstead, retires in November after 48 years' service with the Council. When **Mr. H. W. Elliott** retired recently after 35 years as County Librarian of Dorset it was recalled, *inter alia*, that his salary on appointment was £300 p.a. and he had a bicycle allowance of 1d. a mile.

An archaeological "dig" at Rayleigh Mount (Essex), to seek evidence of a 13th-century castle, was carried out during August under the direction of **Mr. L. Helliwell**, Borough Librarian of Southend.

People

Dr. L. W. Sharp, who was Librarian of Edinburgh University for over 20 years, has died at the age of 61. President of the Scottish Library Association, 1949-50, Dr. Sharp was a former chairman of SCONUL and the first chairman of the Scottish group of the U. and R. section.

Mr. F. C. Francis, Principal Librarian of the British Museum, has been appointed an Honorary Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

A paper on *Comparative Classification* by **D. J. Foskett**, was presented at the Warsaw Conference of the F.I.D. on September 23rd.

Miss B. L. Dockery, Chief Assistant of Widnes P.L., has been appointed a Justice of the Peace. So far as is known, Miss Dockery is the only serving librarian in the country who is a J.P. and this the first occasion the distinction has been accorded to a librarian not a chief officer. Meanwhile, success in an essay competition held by the United Nations Association has won a fortnight's trip to Geneva for another member of the Widnes staff, **Miss Diana Monk**.

Among recent recipients of the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws of the University of Aberystwyth, was **Dr. Thomas Richards**, F.R.S. "for his services as Librarian at Bangor College".

Mr. Raymond Smith, formerly Librarian of the Guildhall, and now in retirement at Seaford, Sussex, has been commissioned to write a new history of the Irish Society, in connection with the Society's 350th anniversary which will be celebrated in 1963.

Miss H. C. Ferrand has arrived in America to take up a year's fellowship in library science at Haverford College, Philadelphia.

He knows what he can do . . . When **Mr. H. C. Lappin**, librarian of Inverurie (Aberdeenshire) applied for an upgrading of salary, he was told that there was to be no change in his grade. "For what reason?" asked Mr. Lappin. The Provost is reported as replying: "There is no need to give any reason. It's a committee decision and if you are not satisfied with it the remedy lies with you."

During this summer, **Mr. Ian Willison**, Assistant Keeper in the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum, is conducting two lecture courses, "Historical Bibliography" and "The Nature and Problems of Bibliographical Research", at the University of Chicago Graduate Library School. Mr. Willison was the author of the section on "Historical Bibliography" in the L.A.'s publication, *Five Years Work in Librarianship 1951-55*.

ANGER OVER PRESS BAN IN LEEDS LIBRARIES

In common with countless others, the Library Association's publications suffered their share of disruption through the printing strike. The difficulties involved in publishing even its monthly journal—in itself never a specially complicated printing job—may be inferred from the size and format of the July and August issues. These were some of the more obvious results of the dispute. But there have been other marginal effects: a great many libraries in the country have felt the results of the interference with publishing schedules, a factor which presents particular difficulties for the many scientific and technical libraries who are responsible for producing abstract journals or some form of published information service.

But the most widely reported—and certainly a highly controversial—side effect of the stoppage was the decision of the Labour controlled councils at Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool and Nottingham to exclude from their council meetings press reporters representing newspapers being produced in spite of the strike. This action has been hotly disputed and the councils concerned have been accused, *inter alia*, of denying a fundamental freedom. In Nottingham's case the Minister of Housing and Local Government took the opportunity to deliver a sharp warning that, if necessary, he would impose "new statutory obligations and a new procedure for enforcement" to ensure that the electorate was not denied the means of being kept informed of the affairs of their local authorities.

Nottingham's action in excluding the Press on July 6th followed a decision by the City Council at Leeds, a week earlier, to "withhold information relating to city matters from the representatives of certain newspapers, and to withdraw certain publications from the city libraries and reading rooms". This resulted in the banning of the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post*. The ban aroused considerable resentment.

Ban in force

On the morning after the order for these papers' withdrawal a group of Conservative councillors went to the Headingley Heath Branch Library in Leeds to find out if the ban had been put into practice. There they were told by the staff that the withdrawal had, in fact, been carried out on the instruction of the chairman of the Libraries and Arts Committee. Enquirers at the Leeds Central Library were told by the City Librarian, Mr. F. G. B. Hutchings: "You cannot have a *Yorkshire Post*. I have nothing more to say." A few days later one wrathful ratepayer registered his protest by distributing copies of the two banned papers among readers in the Central Reading Room. After about thirty minutes the authorities were alerted to the presence

of a resistance movement in their midst and the Commercial Librarian was obliged to sally forth, collect up the offending papers and hand them back to their owner with the request that he leave the Reading Room forthwith. Another Leeds ratepayer registered a protest against the press ban by refusing to pay immediately that portion of his rates applicable to the Libraries Department.

Editor's strictures

Sir Linton Andrews, editor of the *Yorkshire Post* and Chairman of the Press Council, commented in a letter to *The Times*, regarding Leeds: "... instructions to officials prevent the Medical Officer of Health from giving news about epidemics, the Fire Brigade from giving news about fires, and water-works officials from issuing warnings about a possible drought—news which it might be of public importance and value to circulate at once... By publishing council information in time, we are able to stimulate a watchful public interest in what the council is going to do. Electoral apathy would be sure to follow if local opinion had no chance to express itself on current issues before the council met and made its decisions."

British Librarians' Group in North America

A group to be known as the Fellows and Associates of the Library Association in North America (FALANA) is being formed. Its main purpose will be to unite, by means of news-letters, all British librarians in N. America who are concerned with certification and with the equation of British and Canadian methods of library education, and with other matters of mutual interest.

Further details may be obtained by writing to:

FALANA,
Box 310,
Abbotsford,
British Columbia,
Canada.